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ABSTRACT

A March 2000 education summit brought together educators, parents, and community leaders to discuss key issues in the education of American Indian and Alaska Native students who attend school in urban areas. This summary report provides an overview of the main points discussed in a keynote address and four panel discussions. The keynote address by Pierce Hammond, Director of the Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination, U.S. Department of Education, outlined goals and principles of systemic educational reform; key characteristics and elements of systemic reform; and tensions and balances related to top-down versus bottom-up forces, depth versus breadth, process versus product, and long-term versus immediate needs and strategies. He also pointed out that education is a moral enterprise and presented a list of eight lessons related to the change process. The panel discussions focused on: (1) key ingredients of successful schools (research findings, parent and community involvement, dropout prevention); (2) linking education to tomorrow's jobs (entrepreneurship, apprenticeship programs, job training); (3) cultural preservation (language maintenance, involvement of elders in schools, need for cultural standards and infusion of Indian culture into state standards); and (4) the state of urban Indian education (educational needs, research needs). (Contains 19 references, information on the Indian Community School of Milwaukee, contact information for speakers, and a list of conference participants.) (SV)

Educating Urban Indians A Summit for the Future

March 10, 2000

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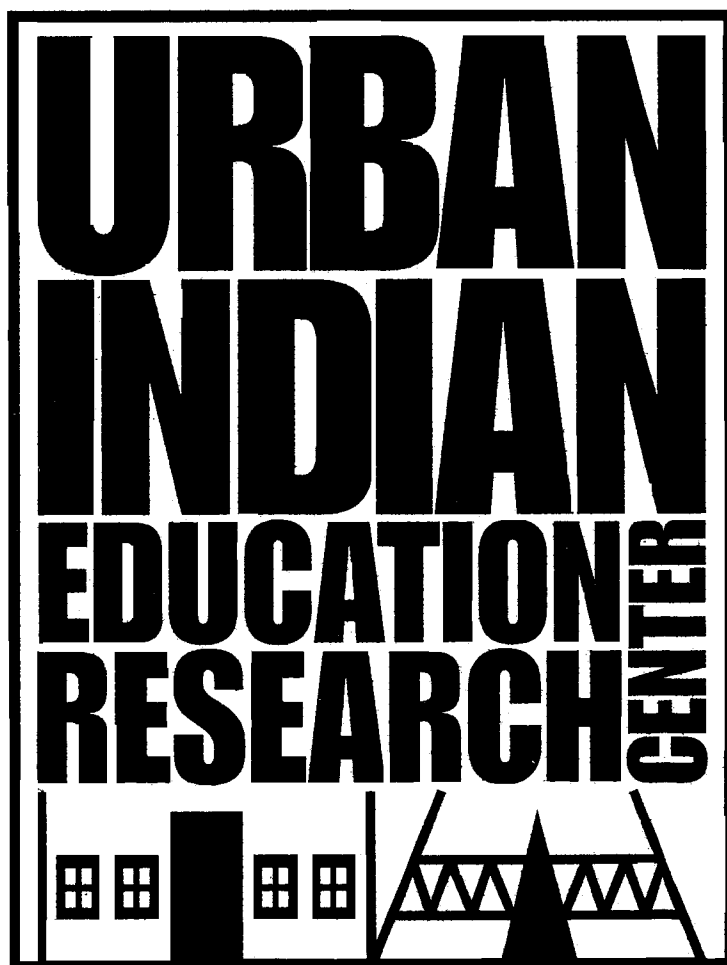
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Educating Urban Indians A Summit for the Future

March 10, 2000

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Urban Education Research Center, in collaboration with the Indian Community School, Inc., of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, sponsored the first Urban Indian Education Summit on March 10, 2000.

The overarching purpose of the Summit was to provide a forum for conversations within which educators, parents, and community leaders would discuss key issues in the education of American Indian and Alaska Native students who attend schools in urban areas.

Four panel discussions occurred:

- The key ingredients of successful schools.
- Linking education to tomorrow's jobs.
- Cultural preservation and curriculum.
- The state of urban education: The future is now.

This Summary Report provides an overview of the major points discussed by participants in all sessions, including keynote address, call to conference, and all four panel discussions.

EDUCATING URBAN INDIANS A SUMMIT FOR THE FUTURE MARCH 10, 2000

AGENDA:

INVOCATION

Sonny Smart
Bad River Ojibwe

CALL TO CONFERENCE

Mark Denning, Oneida
Chair, ICS Board of Directors

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Pierce Hammond
U.S. Department of Education

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

The Key Ingredients of Successful Schools

A discussion among teachers, administrators, community leaders, and parents on what they believe makes a school successful.

Linking Education to Tomorrow's Jobs

From technical to professional, where will the jobs be and how do we develop curriculum and training in our schools to meet the needs of the workplace?

Cultural Presentation

How should schools integrate culture and language? Are there successful multi-tribal models? What are the best practices for integrating community concerns?

The State of Urban Education – The Future is Now

Leading policy makers will discuss urban Indian education and what developments they see in the future.

INVOCATION

Sonny Smart

Traditionally, an invocation is viewed as a spiritual “call to order.” In this case, however, Sonny Smart has infused that invocation with a conference vision, inspiring enough to reiterate it in this Summary Report.

“We are here to help children in their daily lives . . . we must re-educate and re-inculturate children, allow them to find themselves through their culture.

“There must be a paradigm shift. We need to infuse education into our culture rather than infusing culture into the schools. Our culture is being lost – we’ve lost tribes, languages, and customs. Our educational system is sending the message to our children that culture is not important, that culture is marginalized and so it does become marginalized.

“We need a vision, an idea that is greater than ourselves. The only way we can have this vision is to have light – and the only way to find that light is within ourselves.

“By looking within, we will find the questions that need to be answered, the research that needs to be done. We need to remind ourselves about the kinds of communities our children will live in. There are challenges, and some people at this conference have met those challenges. We need to learn from their successes.”

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Pierce Hammond

Director of the Office of Reform Assistance and Dissemination
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
United States Department of Education

Hammond began his Keynote Address with three basic tenants about systemic reform:

Student leadership must be encouraged in attempts to get to freedom, attempts to turn things around, and in attempts to achieve liberty.

The separation of church and state does not negate the fact that education has both spiritual and moral components. Teaching is a moral act.

Participate in constructing a future. There is a tension to preserve the past on one hand and construct the future on the other. Our job is to make sure that that doesn't tear us apart. We need to manage the construction of harmony.

Four Major Problems of Education Today

Teacher Preparation – Statistics say that there will be a need for two million new teachers in the next decade. Where will they come from? Our expectations of new teachers are high and standards have been steadily rising.

Use of Technology – Technology is a way of life now, technology that our parents did not have. This also puts additional pressure on teachers.

Diversity – Last year, California became the third state not to have an ethnic majority. There will come a time when this will be the case over the entire country. We must learn to honor it.

Systemic Reform – Several key factors for systemic reform were put forth.

Students are at the heart of systemic reform, which can be a difficult premise to keep in mind. It is critically important premise for those of us who believe in diversity and equity. We need a system that is able to consider each student.

The critical relationship is between students and teachers. And sometimes, the most interesting student/teacher relationship is when the typical is turned upside down. Teachers can learn from students as well, and gain insight about what it's like to be a student again.

Parents are our children's first and most important teachers. Community members, as well, serve as teachers for our children.

Within the schools, principals need to provide support to teachers. Without strong leadership, reform will fail.

Assessment tells us how we're doing. It gives us a way to look at what we've tried and to see whether we're accomplishing what we set out to do.

Policy changes are more complicated in larger systems where priorities may have already been set by someone else. Policies often are put together without consistency, so we end up in a system where instruction is promoted in an inquiry mode.

Schools are partly about preserving the wisdom of the past – wisdom that the community values, that the community establishes. Schools are about preserving the culture, keeping in mind that cultures are adaptable. Our parents and grandparents survived because their culture wasn't fixed. They have values and sometimes those values change, sometimes languages change. There's a constant tension between the present, the future, and the past.

As we go about constructing education, answer these questions:

What matters to you?

What do you value?

What do you want to keep track of?

How will you assess that?

How will you know if you've succeeded?

At the National Science Foundation, systemic reform is focused on math and science. The NSF's major goals are to significantly improve the learning of all students. The issue isn't just removing the differences between groups, it's about optimizing the outcomes for each individual student. An understanding of what each student can do,

what moves them, and what they feel passionate about is critical. It is just as important as having high expectations.

Systemic reform has been designed to try to change:

- Moving from a view of students as passive observers of facts to students as active critical thinkers and problem solvers.
- Moving from an educational system that was about sorting and selecting kids into "tracks" to inclusiveness.

Characteristics of systemic reform include:

- Optimism – One has to be optimistic about what can be done.
- Vision – One has to know where one is going. The vision needs to be developed by the entire group. If people develop the vision together, they'll understand it and live it.
- Quality – There's a tension that exists between the desire to have perfect systems and the need to take time to do it right.
- Patience – We talking about difficult change and a lifetime process.
- Inquiry – The basis for education is human curiosity. Every educator has a mission to take the curiosity every child is born with and convert it into inquiry, creativity, and making a contribution to society.
- Comprehensiveness – The key is balance; if you try to be too comprehensive, you're almost sure to fail, but if you focus too narrowly, you're almost sure to fail. How do we start getting into balance?

- Collaboration – A network is critical. No one person or institution can accomplish true reform.
- Bootstraps – This is one way to talk about the messiness of improvement. There needs to be improvement in curriculum, then professional development needs to happen, then you need to improve the colleges that are producing teachers, then you need partnerships between industry and schools . . . and so on.
- Renewal – This is important because people in schools tend to become focused on day-to-day issues. From time to time, it's important to reflect and gain a new perspective. Schools are about everyone learning, not just students.
- Integrity – Why are we doing this in the first place? What makes it all hang together?

Tensions and Balances

Tensions typically are not readily resolved. Instead they become balanced over time.

Top-down/bottom-up, the difference between the administrators and the every day reality of the teachers.

Ready, Fire, Aim/Do Versus Plan. If you don't plan, nothing will happen. If you don't know where you're going, you can take any path. But, some planning can't be done in advance and we must recognize that everyone has a personal vision and somehow that vision must be blended into a living community vision.

Depth vs. Breadth – One of the slogans of the modern standards reform movement is less is more. Part of our country's overall culture is that we want more. We are covering more subjects in less depth and it's taking its toll on students' achievement. There's a tradeoff between learning something in depth and learning lots of different things.

Process vs. Product – Do we spend time on the process or the outcome? You can't just pick up someone else's vision and work toward it. Your vision will determine your path.

Long term vs. Immediate – This is a long-term process, as some things will need to be undone, then redone. It is important to remember, however, that as humans, we typically want to see some signs of success relatively early on. Find things that can happen to keep the ball rolling.

Current practice vs. basic change – We don't need to throw everything out and start over, but changes do need to be fundamental.

Attitude – Candor and criticism on one hand, appreciation and cooperation on the other. It's a tension to be managed carefully.

The National Science Foundation, the Urban Systemic Initiative Program, the Rural Systemic Initiative Program, and the Statewide Systemic Initiative Program have identified six issues that they ask those they fund to consider.

- (1) Implementation of a comprehensive, standards-based curriculum aligned with instruction and assessment for each student.
- (2) Policies. Review policies already in place. Does everyone understand them? Do they conflict? Are they consistent?

- (3) Have a unified program. Converge all the resources, and collaborate.
- (4) Community support. Parents typically don't understand what's going on, and if it's different than what they know, they won't think it's very good. You have to involve people and sell the change.
- (5) Evidence. Have you created an environment in which curiosity can bloom? One in which students can reach higher and try different things?
- (6) Equity. We must be serious about this issue and see to it that it stays about the kids.

Reihnhold Neibuhr said:

"Nothing worth doing is completed in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope.

Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in the immediate contexts of history; therefore we must be saved by faith.

Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we must be saved by love."

Education is a moral enterprise.

Michael Fullen, author of *Change Forces*, lists eight basic lessons of the new paradigm of change (see *Appendix for complete reference*).

- (1) You can't mandate what matters. You can't mandate commitment.
- (2) Change is a journey, not a blueprint. Change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement, and sometimes perverse.
- (3) Problems are our friend. Problems test what you think you already know, and problems are your opportunity to be creative. Kids have to be able to develop problem-solving skills to be successful after school.
- (4) Vision and strategic planning come later. Vision is an interaction between a reflection of what we have learned, where are we going, and a reflection on actual activities.
- (5) Individualism and collectivism must have equal power. Operating as an individual is important. Creativity doesn't come from collectives; but collectivism does matter.
- (6) Connection with the wider environment is critical. The best organizations learn externally as well as internally.
- (7) Neither centralized nor decentralized works.
- (8) Every person is a change agent.

CALL TO CONFERENCE

Linda Sue Warner

What are we doing here in Milwaukee and why are we talking about urban Indian education at this time?

"About a year ago, several of us had a discussion about NSSF opportunities for our children. At that time, we agreed to have conversations with officials from some urban school districts. After meeting with people from the Buffalo City Schools, Denver Public Schools, Oklahoma City Schools, Milwaukee and St Paul Schools, we thought it made sense to be more formal about what we're thinking, which is what brought us here today.

"The Indian Community School Board had a vision to create an endowed professorship at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a \$1 million gift. A full professor in education will join the faculty this fall as a result of that vision. The University, as a result of that gift, pledged a second professor of Indian education, which should be in place soon."

"As a follow-up to that, we created an Urban Indian Education Research Advisory Board, and they will be listening to your input today, and to what you think are the important pieces of the agenda that need to be moved forward. That Board will meet tomorrow to discuss the issues debated today and to put together an agenda for future movement."

(Please see Appendix for a selected list of references regarding urban Indian education.)

PANEL I: KEY INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS

Moderator

Sonny Smith

Presenters

John Tippeconnic

Dale Fleming

The Moderator, Sonny Smith, emphasized the importance of getting parents and communities more involved in schools. Traditionally this has not been the case in American Indian community schools.

John Tippeconnic

In 1966, the Rough Rock Demonstration School was opened on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico, and it became the first contemporary, Indian-controlled, community-controlled institution of its type anywhere. We wanted and advocated more control over education so we would have a say in how our kids were going to be educated. Rough Rock became an innovative school; the community got involved and there was much excitement. We know it can be done. We know that language and culture can become the centerpiece in a school with academics swirling around it. We also know that it's difficult to sustain an effort like that.

The money to establish Rough Rock came from private sources without a lot of strings attached – foundation and government money that was flexible. Eventually, money had to be accepted that wasn't so flexible and it changed some of what was being done. It proved to us that tribal support is important and we need that here if we are to be successful.

As I've visited the Indian Community School here this week, I see that the potential here is unlimited. This is the Rough Rock of today. We want to look at what you're doing and how you're doing it and how we might take that to other places and replicate it.

I have four articles to share with you. These articles, written in 1970, 1980, and 1990s, give you a sense of where we've been (please see Appendix for references).

- (1) In 1970, Samuel English pointed out that there is little information available about the problems Indian students face in urban school situations. He also noted that there are real identity problems in urban school situations as it pertains to unenrolled members or federally recognized and state recognized, especially in the context of receiving funds for college and training. He urged more research.
- (2) In 1980, Barbella Lockhart talked about the needs of urban Indians and how they are not being met by public schools or service organizations. The article focused on urban Indian centers and mentioned the services offered by them.
- (3) In 1990, at the National Indian Education Association Conference in San Diego, there was a session on Urban Indian Education that was part of the Indian Nations at Risk Task Force hearing. The major point was that American Indians are a small

minority in large urban schools; there is a lack of funding for programs to meet the needs of these students, especially vocational education and early childhood. There are problems of racism and discrimination and drop-out rates are high. There was a lack of tracking, and urban Indians competed with other minorities for funding. Indian students were becoming involved in gangs.

- (4) In 1996, Duane Champaign at UCLA did a study on service delivery for Native American children in Los Angeles County in California. He highlighted the data, which he noted were not good. We were not doing well in our urban schools; the drop-out rates were high, and achievement test scores and attendance were not where they should be. Money was in short supply and urban Indian parents and community members had little control over the education of their kids.

One of the main themes in all this research is that we have special needs that are not being met by public education nor by the larger urban community. We want more control, more influence and involvement in what happens to our children. This gets to the notion, then, of what are successful schools and what is a successful education?

Characteristics of Effective Schools

Clear goals and high expectations and standards make up a list of effective characteristics of schools; however, communication is the key and is embedded within each of those characteristics. When we talk about a vision and mission and creating goals, we talk about them in the context of the group * to empower people, to have ownership, to share them * communication becomes key in that endeavor.

In successful schools, there is a strong sense of caring among everyone involved. In the ICS, I felt the caring as I walked through the school today.

Another basic principle is to focus on learning. The more you focus on something, the greater likelihood it might happen.

Administrative leadership, as well, makes a world of difference in successful schools. It creates the climate of the school. It creates a learning environment and you can sense it. You can also tell when it's not happening. It's the climate that makes the difference.

Critical Factors of Successful Schools

Based upon my own experience and research, I have made a list of what I call critical factors of successful schools.

The first one deals with thinking. We're busy and often we don't have time to sit and think. We must sit collectively and individually and think about where we are and where we want to go. Not just tomorrow, but five, ten, or fifteen years from now. Planning is part of thinking and high expectations will deliver the best possible education for our kids.

Use research. It's not enough to talk about it and come up with a plan of action unless we have an implementation and follow-up strategy to go with it. Assign responsibility and follow-up.

Constant and focused attention gets back to the notion of the more time you spend on

something the more likely it is to happen. If we want to improve our curriculum, we must focus on our curriculum.

Focus on students. This is a very clear idea. It's the foundation. It's why we're here.

When we talk about successful schools, we talk about success over time. Things just don't happen overnight. You can't do everything but you can do certain things. Policy makers want to see results overnight; they want the information, the data immediately. But long-term success is what we want.

We've got to think beyond schools. Think comprehensively. Schools can't do it all, the community must participate. We've got to involve community entities in education and schools in making the connections and establishing working relationships. We talk these days about full-service schools, integrated schools, and school-linked services, especially in urban situations where kids are placed at-risk for various reasons. Those connections are critical.

Tribes and tribal leadership. Sometimes it is difficult to get tribal government involved and committed to education because of other priorities that the tribe might have. But I believe that tribal leadership involvement is critical for successful Indian schools, even in urban situations.

New and refined knowledge. We know what's going on around us, what the latest research is. Teachers have a lot to offer in terms of classroom research. They should be involved and encouraged to participate in ways to improve their schools.

Demonstrate success. From day one, collect information and data so that when you're asked how you're doing and whether you're successful, you can point to your information. Use different types of measures – not just academic test scores * to demonstrate success.

Resources make a difference. Lack of funding is a continual problem in Indian education. We need people, time, facilities, and technology.

We need good people. People who are dedicated, committed, who believe and will go out of their way to make the school successful, to work with students.

Dale Fleming

Our Indian program in Stockton is in an urban setting, in the central valley of California. We have 1,581 Indian students for Title IX and 150 students counted, even though not funded for their education, under the new Title IX proposals. They are scattered through 44 different schools and come from 90 different tribal backgrounds.

We used to have a 98 percent drop-out rate. We now have a 98 percent graduation rate and of those 98 percent, we follow 80 percent through their college years. What we've seen over time is a tremendous change in the appreciation for school and education, and self-esteem. We've worked hard to be sure the kids feel important, and that they know us at Indian educators.

In our community, we use every opportunity we can to foster education. We have used Carl Perkins funding to help parents go to school and older children continue school. We tape the arts commissions to help our dance groups and our arts and crafts school classes.

Another project we're involved with is the Math Engineering Science Achievement Program (MESA), designed to help students who will not go to college and who are not being served by the schools. Some of these Indian children have never had a tribal background, they may be second generation big city. They know what they are but they often don't tell anyone. Or, they may be from a terminated tribe. This makes it a complicated matter when it comes to Johnson O'Malley money, as well.

All of our kids have the same problems. It took a lot of hard work to convince the Stockton school district that we were very concerned about the failure of our Indian students. We went right to the parents, since the reason most of our students were dropping out was because they just weren't going to school. This was difficult, with 90 different tribes in the district. We had Shoshones who said they'd never sat with a Navajo that long in their lives without getting into a battle. We had gatherings and pow wows and eventually we created a base.

The next step, then, was to convince the school district that we were important and that we cared about our students. The programs for Indian students were ineffective and we had to go back and look at them carefully. I also was named to the Compliance Review Team for the State of California and I was able to open doors that had never been opened before.

We also must be diligent in our battles to get our students recognized. For instance, last year I was told that I had too many Indian students in a magnet school. What we came up against was that the state mandated desegregation noted only 1 percent Indian students, and so the school was trying to keep compliant. We needed to fight a Title IX battle but we did it. Another issue is ethnic identification of Indian students. Oftentimes, school administrators just look at a kid and decide what they are. Unfortunately, this is how schools receive some funding, and if Indian educators are left out of the loop, Indian students are often not identified.

Some things we've done in our district that we think have had positive impacts on our schools:

We created a binder, one for each grade level K-12, that contains information relevant to that grade level about language arts, music, food, and tribal history. We've kept working on it for several years and we're slowly matching it to state standards to make it part of the school curriculum. For the first time this year, there will be an American Indian literature class as part of the high school curriculum.

We also have a newsletter going out to over 500 families.

We offer independent study or home tutoring for those Indian students who may not be making it in high school.

At the end of every school year, we have a pre-planning document that goes to every principal. The document gives our goals and objectives, the duties of our certified Indian education person, the duties of our assistants, along with a schedule calendar. We tell them what will be discussed at each of our parent advisory meetings, and what we will be teaching in our 3-hour culture classes.

PANEL II: LINKING EDUCATION TO TOMORROW'S JOBS

Moderator

Peter Homer

Participants

Donna Domencich

Pat Logan

Greg Johns

Renee Zakhar

Pete Homer

The National Indian Business Association represents approximately 24,000 of the 103,000 American Indian/Alaskan native businesses in this country with more than 1,200 members. Small Indian enterprises and businesses do about \$11 billion in business each year. Gaming and casinos do about \$8.5. The Association works hand-in-hand with both tribal governments and casinos and entrepreneurs to sustain and develop business.

I recently became involved with the American Indian Business Leaders Association, which looks at and develops curriculum, specifically entrepreneurial skills from K-12. It was initiated because traditionally, we don't have many Indian businesses that can be handed down through families, nor do many models exist in Indian communities.

Donna Domencich

I came to the Milwaukee Indian Manpower Council in 1975 to be the apprenticeship coordinator. I also worked with the State of Wisconsin Bureau of Apprenticeship Programs as a district representative. In this state, to be a district representative, one had to be a card-carrying journeyman—serve an apprenticeship in a trade. To fulfill the obligation, I became an apprentice, working with the State of Wisconsin. The journeymen who trained me were white male representatives, who taught me how to monitor the apprenticeship programs through formal contracts and to learn all the procedures in laws. I learned on the job, as apprentices do. When most people think of apprenticeships, they think of construction trades, but there are also service trades apprenticeships. A funeral director is an apprenticeable occupation in this state. Barber/cosmetology is also apprenticeable.

I used to talk to high school kids about their futures in the workplace, but part of the problem when you talk to juniors and seniors is that their curriculum is already set. Advisors know nothing about the trades, nor do they want to know. They don't understand that a tradesperson is just as important as someone with a college degree.

A tool and die apprentice training program is five years in length. The student works alongside a journeyman and the average week is 50 hours in length, with an average wage of \$55,000 per year. It's a great alternative to a college degree and a viable alternative for some students.

Pat Logan

In 1992, at the Milwaukee Area Technical College (*see Appendix for reference to web page*), an American Indian Advisory Committee was initiated, made up of community members representing all types of organizations. The committee's charge was to keep the program informed about the needs of the Indian community.

One of the committee's notes had to do with the fact that there were jobs available through the Indian Manpower Council, but that there weren't many Indian people able to go into those jobs. They didn't have the right training, they didn't have the high school diploma, they didn't have GED's, some of them couldn't read, some couldn't do elementary math. What came out of it was the knowledge that we need to train our young people.

In response to this, Spotted Eagle High School was formed – an alternative high school through the Milwaukee Public Schools – with the expressed purpose of training our students and getting them a high school diploma.

We had many problems. Our students weren't in school; they started in elementary school but by the time they got to high school, most had dropped out. We began by letting our students know what jobs are out there and what they need to know to get those jobs. We used a home study approach, where people come into the school and help each student individually. They talk to their teachers, look at their report cards and give them the support they need to succeed.

Greg Johns

At MATC, our programs are focused on moving students towards jobs. They come out of our school with a two-year degree and job-ready.

We are part of a bigger system in Wisconsin. There are 15 other schools in the vo-tech system and we are the largest with 65,000 students, 12,000 of whom are full-time. We have the largest number of Indian students in the state.

We have 32 comprehensive programs, and all curricula change and grow with industry. We have one program called the Cooperative Urban Teacher Education Program, geared toward minority students. We put them through their first two years of general education and then we add teacher programs to that. We can do the remedial work necessary, and we have an articulation program that works with the 4-year colleges to get teachers in the field and hopefully back here.

Renee Zakhar

The Milwaukee Jobs Initiative is essentially a business, labor, and community organization, with the goal of getting low-income people into good jobs. We're not so much focused on long-term training, but in finding jobs for people. To date, the three projects we're involved with – manufacturing, printing, and construction – have placed over 700 people in jobs over the past two years, at a wage of about \$10 per hour. We are performance-based; if we do not maintain that goal of getting someone a job, we lose money.

Another unique feature is that it's called the sectorial initiative, which means that unlike just trying to get people into any job at all, we're focused on three specific areas. The three we've chosen to focus on are manufacturing, printing, and construction, because they're all high-wage and they're growing fast.

PANEL III: CULTURAL PRESENTATION

Moderator

Eleanor Laughlin

Participants

Rosemary Christensen

Karen Buller

Cornel Pewewardy

Eleanor Laughlin

We have over 2,000 students enrolled in the school district in Fairbanks, Alaskan natives and American Indians. Like everyone else, we have lots of students who are dropping out or students who are not achieving. When we think of curriculum, we have to think about the issue of preservation and why it's important.

At a summit in Juneau sponsored by the Alaska Systemic Initiative and Sea Alaska Corporation (*see Appendix for additional information*), someone made a statement that stuck in my mind. Being a native is not a contradiction or compromise. We have come this far and our minds have been colonized through the system and we're now in the process of decolonizing it. In order for us to teach our children, we need to maintain the curriculum, and more than maintain it, we have to take it from elders and record it and present it in a way that children can come out whole and not have the missing pieces of their education. Realizing and knowing who you are as a native people makes you more successful.

In Fairbanks, we are integrating culture and language. We have a room, we call it the Alaska room (*see Appendix for additional information*), and once the teachers are done with the students in regular classes, they bring them to the Alaska room for a half day and they work at learning centers with the native elders. In the summer, we hold the Alaska Indigenous People Academy (*see Appendix for additional information*). It is a time when we select elders and teachers from different regions in Alaska and we work on culture projects and curriculum.

Rosemary Christensen

Rosemary was raised on the Bad River Indian Reservation. She holds an Ed.M from Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and an Ed.D. from the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis. After many years in education at all levels, she currently serves as a Visiting Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, teaching in the American Indian Studies Program.

When we talk about how we can do something about language and preservation and culture, we really have to begin with language. As our elders tell us, without language there is no culture. When I finally got this concept through my head, I immediately wanted to learn all I could about it, which led me to do the case study I'll talk about next.

In the case study I just completed, I researched the best practices of teachers in Ojibwe Country.

If we know how to listen, and it is a skill that we must learn, then we know how to listen to our elders. If you've ever observed your elders listening, then you know how to listen. It's one of the things we must teach our children if we are to be incorporating tradition into our schooling structure. We need to look at form and function.

Another thing I have my students do is approximate oral tradition. They know little or nothing about the traditional knowledge that we all take for granted and that we heard when we were young. So I give them a book and ask them to read it then present it. They do a good job and I'm proud of them. They're approximating oral tradition when they make their presentations.

This is what I learned as I got older. I am still desperately trying to complete my education in oral tradition. I've already completed my graduate school education in the white man's form of knowledge and I'm done with that. But as far as my own traditional knowledge is concerned, I will have to do that for the rest of my life because I have so much to learn. We need to trust our elders and we need to bring them into the schools. When we talk about elder tradition, when we're talking about traditional knowledge, we are talking about something we have to participate in. We can't just read about it, we have to live it.

When I was in the Minneapolis Public Schools and ran the summer program, I brought in as many elders as I could get to just come and be around the classroom. Any time there was an elder in the room, the students behaved. They paid attention, just the way we do when we're around elders. It's called patterned thought and our children need to learn it.

Karen Buller

At the National Indian Telecommunications Institute (*see Appendix for reference to web page*), we try to do language and cultural preservation within a multimedia sphere. Most of us in this room had only an oral tradition. Computers and multimedia have caught up with us and now we can finally preserve our traditions. We can finally say things in our own words, not just being described by missionaries or historians or anthropologists. The Internet gives us the power to describe ourselves in our own words and tell what we think are most important things about us.

What I've found is that most elders are afraid of technology and don't want anything to do with it. It is my unfortunate job to tell them that it's too late to safeguard their language and culture so we need to control the process as much as we can.

Our organization is developing a cultural curriculum model – a five-step model under an NSF grant (*see Appendix for reference to web page*). We are teaching educators all over the country to develop cultural curriculum by using our web page and other materials.

Another project we're working on with the Department of Commerce is called the virtual museum. In conjunction with the New Mexico Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, we're developing a web museum for those tribes who have items they'd like to display but don't have a physical building. This site includes not only photos of physical items, but stories and traditions. We are not only protecting language, but cultures as well.

Cornell Pewewardy

Definitions are important. Who's definition of culture do we use? Also, what is the definition of success. We know that the definition of success for most American schools involves academic achievement, social status, and money. For indigenous people, it has much to do with culture and language.

You can go in an Indigenous school and because of the smell because of the look, the beauty, you know who's important – they're up on the walls, they reflect your culture. But if you go into a native school and there's no culture and there's no smell, where is your soul? There's school after school like that in our country because of the ideology. And it may be very different from where they practice. So culture [in our schools] is not important . . . it's relegated to entertainment.

I deconstruct racism. I know we grew up in American systems full of American hegemony. Issues of racism and not understanding because of differences of culture. I use the term, coined by Joyce King, called dysconscious racism. It is racism where people are unaware, totally unconscious because they are conditioned by what is normal to their life. That's why there's so much incongruency with our native schools when they have a culture-based education approach and they have teachers with ideologies coming from Eurocentric monocultural teacher training programs. There will be cultural dissonance every time.

Education is a double-edged sword when it comes to American education. Research, because I'm invested in research today, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, is a textbook for many of you to research, written by Linda Smith (see *Appendix for reference*). She talks about decolonization and research as dirty words when it comes to indigenous people. What do we have to show for all the masters' theses and dissertations that have been written?

I believe there should be a research policy by each tribe, which would eliminate repetitive research projects. You should design cultural competencies to educate students to be teachers, counselors, and social workers. Assessment is a big part of it. There should be both teaching matched with methods of learning and also the assessment component to see what has been learned.

What we have today is a blitz of language we don't understand, language created to take us away from our own struggle. It's called xenophobic coded language. If you really want to exercise sovereignty, have rhetoric sovereignty. Name yourselves in your own terms. I'm weaning myself from that nasty word called "Indian." My grandfather was Indian, my father was called American Indian. I, who took native studies, was taught "Native American," and now I know better. I borrow a lot from my brothers from the north with "First Nations People," sometimes "Indigenous Peoples." That is empowerment of rhetoric sovereignty.

Not only the words, but the symbols and icons as well. If you really deal with children on a day-to-day basis, you know that self-esteem is the motivator of academic performance. We have to eliminate negative images and mascots and logos that are just nasty.

Infuse culture into state standards. Require teachers to take a course in Indigenous studies.

Technology is natural, just like learning styles are natural. Many of our indigenous students are global learners; many are topic-associated learners.

We have to stand out and take a risk if we are to be advocates for indigenous children.

PANEL IV: THE STATE OF URBAN EDUCATION – THE FUTURE IS NOW

Moderator

Gerald Gipp

Participants

Leo Nolan

Bruce Ramirez

Gerald Gipp

Too often, American Indians have not been a part of the national research agenda. The recent research agenda (*see Appendix for additional information*), authorized through an Executive Order, emphasizes the need for Indian education research to include American Indian involvement.

Leo Nolan

The mortality rate continues to be abnormally high for American Indians, six times greater than the average. In 1992-94, there were 45 deaths per 100,000 people, with an increase of 49 deaths per 100,000 in 1994-96. These numbers are compared to 7 deaths per 100,000 in the general population.

The Department of Health and Human Services, specifically the Indian Health Service, is responsible for the concerns of Indian health, and we need to form collaborations and partnerships with various organizations to discuss the needs of urban Indians.

Bruce Ramirez

We need to be more inclusive when thinking about our future. Think beyond the borders of the United States. There needs to be early intervention of both special needs and gifted children, and a growth of tribally operated vocational and rehabilitation programs should be encouraged. I also believe that we need to be more involved in the research agenda on Indian education.

In terms of competencies, we need to be able to articulate and define the knowledge skills that our teachers need. New teachers need to be supported and involved in the research agenda. As we have heard before, teachers are on a front-line of research. Get them involved.

Parent training centers to focus on educating parents about special needs/disabilities, lobbying, technology, and leadership in Indian education. Advocacy is imperative and we need to be more united when educating our children. We need to move past thinking in terms of urban versus rural, group versus group. We need to come together and collaborate.

There is important research work being done at the University of Illinois in a project – Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services – through the Early Childhood Research Institute. For more information, visit www.clas.uiuc.edu.

Gerald Gipp

There are common situations and issues that both urban and reservation Indians face. But, Indians in urban areas are often misidentified, rendering them virtually invisible. Indians today are different than yesterday; they face the same issues as other students. They need a meaningful and relevant education. *(see Appendix for reference to Deyhle and Swisher's review of literature).*

We need to share information, especially information that discusses our success. Some recent topics/issues that have been studied include:

- Understanding urban Indian students.
- What does relevant, meaningful education mean?
- What's the role of culture? How do we define culture?
- What are the best practices regarding culture?
- How do we share information when we are successful?
- Accountability
- How do we get schools to listen to us?
- How can we get tribal governments to play a role in education?
- Infusing cultural standards into education (see Alaska's model-check web site)
- Equity of resources
- Statutory issues (e.g., federal funding, federal laws, systemic reform)

I emphasize that change requires commitment. Education has evolved from mission-boarding-public-urban schools. Many of the urban problems are common to the reservation; we need to remember, build upon, and seek answers.

APPENDICES

References

Information Regarding the Indian Community School of Milwaukee

List of Speakers

List of Participants

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www.clas.uiuc.edu (This site provides information regarding the CLAS project- Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services, Early Childhood Research Institute- at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.)

www.doyanfoundation.com/curriculum.html (This site provides information regarding the Alaska Indigenous Peoples Academy.)

www.ed.gov/nativeamericanresearch (This site provides information regarding the national research agenda for American Indian and Alaska Native education as outlined in the White House Executive Order 13096.)

www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA (This site provides information regarding the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs.)

www.matc.edu (This site provides information regarding Milwaukee Area Technical College.)

www.ncrel.org (This site provides information regarding the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. Located in Chicago, this regional resource center serves Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.)

www.northstar.k12.ak.us/schools/upk/var/var.html (This is the website for the virtual Alaska room, a collection of Alaska native artifacts – e.g., Eskimo harpoons, Tlinglit totems, Haida hats, Athabascan baskets, Aleut masks, etc.)

www.nsf.gov (This site provides information regarding the National Science Foundation.)

www.sealaska.com (Sealaska Corporation is a regional corporation formed under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 – ANCSA.)

Information Regarding the Indian Community School of Milwaukee, Inc.

The Indian Community School of Milwaukee, Inc. (ICS) was founded by a group of American Indian parents who felt that local public schools were not adequately addressing their children's needs. The school was formally incorporated with the State of Wisconsin in 1970. Today, ICS serves approximately 300 students in four-year-old Kindergarten through 8th grade.

The founder's mission statement of the Indian Community School is based on the premise of Blending Books and Drums:

"The Indian Community School of Milwaukee exists to offer a quality academic education and [to] foster the cultural and physical well-being of Indian children and youth. Traditional culture, language, heritage, values and spirituality provide the foundation for this mission and help awaken our students' desire to achieve."

The proposed mission statement is:

"The Indian Community School of Milwaukee, Inc. exists to foster quality education, cultural and physical well being of Indian children and youth." Traditional values, culture, language, heritage and spirituality will provide the foundation for this development – to awaken the desire to achieve."

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